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EXAMINER

DODDS, HAROLD E

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2177

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

1/11

# Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/419,327

Applicant(s)

JENKINS, STEVEN R.

Examiner

Harold E. Dodds, Jr.

Art Unit

2177

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

## Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

## Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on \_\_\_\_.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-14 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 15 October 1999 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on \_\_\_\_ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

## Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☒ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) \_\_\_\_.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s) \_\_\_\_.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## DETAILED ACTION

### *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103*

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1, 7, and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Teare et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,151,624), Huang et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,266,695), Robinson (U.S. Patent No. 5,918,014), and Bowen et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,094,049).

3. Teare rendered obvious independent claim 1 by the following:

“...logging on to the collaborative management application...” at col. 12, lines 21-23.

“...configuring an appearance of the collaborative management application...” at col. 4, lines 39-41.

“...viewing, adding, or modifying items of information...” at col. 12, lines 56-61 and col. 17, lines 44-47.

“...pertaining to one or more clients...” at col. 11, lines 66-67 and col. 12, line 1.

“...specifying identifying information for a client...” at col. 11, lines 66-67 and col. 12, lines 1-4.

“...specifying information for at least one matter of the client...” at col. 8, lines 27-30.

“... viewing, adding, or modifying further comprises...” at col. 12, lines 56-61 and col. 17, lines 44-47.

"...selecting a client..." at col. 11, lines 66-67 and col. 12, line 1.

"...selecting one or more matters in connection with the selected client..." at col. 8, lines 27-30.

"...selecting a user..." at col. 4, lines 15-21.

"...displaying only items for which the selected user has been designated..." at col. 26, lines 56-58.

"...configuring..." at col. 4, lines 39-41.

"...viewing, adding, or modifying..." at col. 12, lines 56-61 and col. 17, lines 44-47.

"...performed via an Internet web site..." at col. 18, lines 52-54.

Teare does not teach the use of user groups, the use of levels of authorization, the use of components, the use of categories, the use of groups of matters, and the use of filters.

4. However, Huang teaches the use of user groups and the use of levels of authorization as follows:

"...identifying a user group for the client..." at col. 11, lines 28-35.

"...having some level of authorization with respect to matters of the client..." at col. 11, lines 28-35.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to use user groups and levels of authorization in order to designate the system use privileges of each of the users.

Huang does not teach the use of components, the use of categories, the use of groups of matters, and the use of filters.

5. However, Robinson teaches the use of subject matter groups, categories, and filters as follows:

“...one or more matters comprise a group of matters...” at col. 5, lines 32-33.

“...with the selected group of matters...” at col. 5, lines 32-33.

“...selecting a filter for filtering items...” at col. 4, lines 25-27

“...displaying the filtered items to a user...” at col. 19, lines 18-23.

“...specifying at least one category...” at col. 7, lines 7-11

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to use groups of matters and categories for organizing information and to have the use of filters to exclude information outside of these filters in order to provide for convenience and to be able to have a manageable set of data for viewing.

Robinson does not teach the use of components.

5. However, Bowen teaches the use of components as follows:

“...selecting a component in connection with all matters of the client...” at col. 7, lines 52-53.

“...for the component...” at col. 7, lines 52-53.

“...selecting a component in connection...” at col. 7, lines 52-53.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to use components as well as groups of matters and categories for organizing information for the convenience of the user.

6. As per claim 7, the “...assigning an authorization level to each user of the user group...” is taught by Huang at col. 14, lines 35-43.

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7. As per claim 8, the "...modifying the authorization level of a user of the user group in connection with at least one matter of the client..." is taught by Huang at col. 14, lines 52-57.

8. Claims 2-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Teare, Huang, Robinson, and Bowen as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Evans et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,784,6191) and Gore (U.S. Patent No. 5,873,095).

As per claim 2, the "...adding an item to a component"...and "...specifying a status of said added item..." are not taught by either Teare, Huang, Robinson, or Bowen.

However, Evans teaches the adding of items to components as follows:

"...an item may be added to a notebook component by dragging it directly into a notebook window from any system component, such as a network browser, in accordance with the embedding procedure described herein..." at col. 16, lines 5-9.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to be able to add items to components in order to provide flexibility in the system for the convenience of the user.

Evan did not teach the specifying of a status for the added items.

However, Gore teaches the setting of a status as follows:

"...Locator application 22 provides a user with the ability to set his current status, to view the current status of another employee, and to view a list of employees having a given status..." at col. 2, lines 57-60.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to be able to assign statuses to added items in order to provide flexibility in the system for the convenience of the user.

As per claim 3, the "...changing a status of said added item..." is not taught by either Teare, Huang, Robinson, or Bowen.

However, Gore teaches the changing of a status as follows:

"...To change his current status using status window application 24, the employee can select and change status icon 102 until status icon 102 corresponds to the desired status..." at col. 6, lines 51-53.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to be able to change statuses of items in order to provide flexibility in the system for the convenience of the user.

As per claim 4, "...changing a status of said added item comprises selecting an icon associated with said item status..." is not taught by either Teare, Huang, Robinson, or Bowen.

However, Gore teaches the use of icons for changing of a status as follows:

"...To change his current status using status window application 24, the employee can select and change status icon 102 until status icon 102 corresponds to the desired status..." at col. 6, lines 51-53.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to be able to use icons for changing statuses of items for the convenience of the user.

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As per claim 5, the "...selecting an item status and displaying only items having a status corresponding to the selected item status..." is not taught by either Teare, Huang, Robinson, or Bowen.

However, Gore teaches the displaying of items having a selected status as follows:

"...If a list is desired, then, in step 88, the locator application queries the database and displays a list of employees having a status matching the queried status..." at col. 6, lines 6-9.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to be able to specify a status and to obtaining a list of items having the specified status for the convenience of the user.

9. Claims 12 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Teare, Huang, Robinson, Bowen, Evans, and Gore as applied to claim 2 above, and further in view of Vaughn (U.S. Patent No. 4,800,590) and Lindholm (U.S. Patent No. 6,108,754).

As per claim 12, the "...item status is selected from a group consisting of hot issue, in progress, and done..." is not taught by either Teare, Huang, Robinson, Bowen, Evans, or Gore.

However, Vaughn teaches the use of the concept "hot Issue" as follows:

The problem of computer security has become a very hot issue recently, with the movie "War Games" and the problems with "hackers" finding their way into time-shared computer systems..." at col. 1, lines 51-54.



It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to be able to specify the status of an issue as "hot issue" in order to indicate that immediate action is required.

Vaughn does not teach the use of statuses of in-progress or done.

However, Lindholm teaches the use of statuses of in-progress or done as follows:

"...The garbage collector would have done so because it had determined that, except for the in-progress reference being set to refer to the object, the synchronization construct meets the termination criteria..." at col. 18, lines 23-27.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to be able to specify the status of an issue as "in progress" or "done" as well as "hot issue" in order to indicate the progress of processing issues.

10. Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Teare, Huang, Robinson, and Bowen as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Graham et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,044,138), Gabbe et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,550,965), Sanschagrín et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,295,540), and Jeffrey et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,262,720).

A per claim 6, the "...group consisting of a status component...", "...an outside service provider notes...", "...a client notes...", "...a checklist...", "...critical dates...", "...only users identified as outside service provider users can modify outside service provider notes items...", and "...only users identified as client users can modify client notes items..." are not taught by either Teare, Huang, Robinson, or Bowen.

However, Graham teaches the use of outside service provider notes as follows:

"...Upon selection of the client, the means 60 is initiated and a screen is displayed permitting or requesting the service provider to enter comments to be associated with the matter/call..." at col. 6, lines 63-66.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to allow outside service providers to enter comments for convenience and the allow modification of those comments by the same outside service providers in order to maintain integrity of these comments.

Graham does not teach the use of client notes, statuses, checklists, and critical dates.

However, Gabbe teaches the use of client notes as follows:

"...The annotating process in block 506 accepts client notes 514, event data 106, media representations 202, and the table of contents 302 as input. Client notes 514 are ancillary data 530 which is entered by manually typing characters into the keyboard or by semi-automatically highlighting a textual entry with a pointing device..." at col. 13, lines 45-50.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to allow clients to enter comments for convenience and the allow modification of those comments by the same clients in order to maintain integrity of these comments.

Graham does not teach the use of statuses, checklists, and critical dates.

However, Sanschagrin teaches the use of statuses and critical dates as follows:

"...The inventory information or equivalent that can be retrieved from INM 11 include, for example, location/relay rack terminal identification (TID) information, hierarchy human equipment catalogue inventory group (HECIG) information, plug-in type information such as human equipment catalogue items (HECI),

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slot ID, and NE assignment status (in-service or not in-service)..." at col. 4, lines 54-60.

"...The TIRKS system allows users to automatically log, route, and monitor the progress of work orders (WO), perform end-to-end circuit design based on generic specifications and automated scripts, view and maintain an accurate, up-to-date inventory of all facilities and equipment and their assignments, execute interactive, user-defined queries and generate customized reports of work center activity, critical dates, and jeopardy conditions, and interface seamlessly with other Bellcore operations support systems..." at col. 1, lines 31-40.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to use statuses and critical dates as components for convenience.

Sanschagrin does not teach the use of checklists.

However, Jeffrey teaches the use of checklists as follows:

"...In accordance with this invention, an electronic checklist system, and corresponding method for controlling the presentation of non-normal checklists produced by the crew alert system of complex equipment, such as an airplane, as a result of the complex equipment operating in a non-normal manner is disclosed..." at col. 3, lines 65-67 and col. 4, lines 1-3.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to use checklists as components for convenience.

11. Claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Teare, Huang, Robinson, and Bowen as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Hunt et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,253,234).

As per claim 9, the "...Internet web site..." is taught by Teare at col. 18, lines 52-54,

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the "...group consisting of the client..." is taught by Trare at col. 11, lines 66-67 and col. 12, line 1,

but the "...is maintained by a party selected from the group consisting...and an outside service provider..." is not taught by either Teare, Huang, Robinson, or Bowen.

However, Hunt teaches the maintaining of Internet web sites by service providers as follows:

"...Another problem relates to the fees charged by service providers for maintaining a Web site..." at col. 2, lines 35-36.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to use either clients or service providers of these clients to maintain Internet Web sites in order to promote system flexibility and convenience.

12. Claim 10 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Teare, Huang, Robinson, and Bowen as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Yianilos et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,321,609).

As per claim 10, the "...filter corresponds to a time period and wherein the filtered items comprise items edited during the time period corresponding to the filter... is not taught by Teare, Huang, Robinson, or Bowen.

However, Yianilos teaches the use of a filter for a time period as follows:

"...In order to enable a useful selection of relevant articles, these filter parameters are set forth in four Groups, namely, "Article Type", "Location", "Subject", and "Time Period."....," at col. 2, lines 7-10.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to use time period filters to include only information inside of these time

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periods in order to provide for convenience and to be able to have a manageable set of data for viewing.

13. Claim 11 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Teare, Huang, Robinson, Bowen, and Yianilos as applied to claim 10 above, and further in view of Fish (U.S. Patent No. 6,195,652).

As per claim 11, the "...filtered items comprise all items added to the component since the items were last viewed..." is not taught by Teare, Huang, Robinson, Bowen, or Yianilos.

However, Fish teaches the use of items entered after a time as follows:

"...searches could be stored that only look for items entered after the last time the search was run..." at col. 11, lines 60-61.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to use time period filters to include only information after these time periods in order to provide for convenience and to be able to have a manageable set of data for viewing.

14. Claim 13 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Teare, Huang, Robinson, and Bowen as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Evans and Achacoso et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,161,149).

As per claim 13, the "...designating a user..." is taught by Teare at col. 4, lines 15-21,  
the "...adding an item to a component..."

and "...automatically generating an E-mail..." are not taught by Teare, Huang, Robinson, and Bowen.

However, Evans teaches the adding of items to components as follows:

"...an item may be added to a notebook component by dragging it directly into a notebook window from any system component, such as a network browser, in accordance with the embedding procedure described herein..." at col. 16, lines 5-9.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to be able to add items to components in order to provide flexibility in the system for the convenience of the user.

Evans does not teach the automatic generation of an E-mail message.

However, Achacoso teaches the automatic generation of an E-mail message as follows:

"...The notice generator may push notices via e-mail, narrowcasting, or a combination..." at col. 4, lines, 6-7.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to automatically generate E-mail notices and to send them to designated users in order to notify the users of changes to pending items.

15. Claim 14 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Teare, Huang, Robinson, and Bowen as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Horvitz et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,864,848), Achacoso, and Shaw et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,199,106).

As per claim 14, the "...user selection of an E-mail icon associated with one of the displayed items..."

the "...displaying at least one E-mail group for the selected client, the at least one E-mail group comprising a list of users for receiving E-mail messages....,"

the "...sending the E-mail message to the selected users....,"

the "...collaborative management application automatically filling in a subject field of the E-mail message with a description of the associated item....," are not taught by either Teare, Huang, Robinson, or Bowen.

However, Horvitz teaches the use of icons for E-mail messages as follows:

"...At a convenient point in time for reading e-mail, the user may select an e-mail icon on a menu bar to activate the e-mail program 36..." at col. 19, lines 41-43.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to be able to use icons for activating E-mail programs for the convenience of the user.

Horvitz does not teach the use of lists of E-mail message users or the automatic filling in of the E-mail subject.

However, Achacoso teaches the use of lists of E-mail message users as follows:

"...in an internet embodiment, one person can identify e-mail addresses for a desired group of colleagues, friends, or family, name the group, and provide a uniform resource locator (URL) for a group conference. The system pushes an e-mail notice to the desired group, with the URL..." at col. Col. 6, lines 42-46.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to provide the user with the means of selecting a set of E-mail recipients from

a list of E-mail addresses and sending an E-mail message to the designated recipients for user convenience.

Achacoso does not teach the automatically filling in the subject field on an E-mail message.

However, Shaw teaches the automatically filling in the subject field on an E-mail message as follows:

"...If "mail <recipient e-mail > <subject line>" is defined as the action to be performed, the client computer switches to the "write" screen, automatically filling in the address and the subject of an e-mail message..." at col. 16, lines 30-33.

It would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art at the time of the invention to automatically fill in the subject field on an E-mail message in order to provide a set of uniform subject field entries for the E-mail messages.

### ***Conclusion***

16. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Harold E. Dodds, Jr. whose telephone number is (703)-305-1802. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday 8:00 - 4:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John E. Breene can be reached on (703)-305-9790. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703)-305-9730 for regular communications and 703-746-7238 for After Final communications.



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Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703)-305-3900.

*Harold E. Dodds, Jr.*

Harold E. Dodds, Jr.  
Patent Examiner  
January 10, 2002

*John E. Breene*  
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